



Once More Unto the Breach

Another new year has arrived. I want to thank all our readers and contributors for supporting *ARMOR* and the U.S. Armor Association. I believe our magazine is the finest, most relevant professional journal available. Since 1888, when *ARMOR*'s predecessor, *The Cavalry Journal*, began publication, this magazine has been at the forefront of all professional journals, and it is my intent to raise the bar.

With that, we can't sit on our laurels and pat ourselves on the back. It has been over 20 years since *ARMOR*'s last reader survey. In this issue, we have developed a survey requesting your input to make this journal an even better forum. Please take the time to answer the survey and mail it in or visit our website at www.knox.army.mil/survey/armormagazinesurvey. From your own computer, you can complete the survey and, with the click of a mouse, submit it. Technology is great.

Operation Iraqi Freedom introduced the need in our Army and armor forces for dismounted combat tankers. Our armor and cavalry units have quickly adapted to the mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time available (METT-T), and have shown once again that tankers and cavalrymen know how to respond and overcome asymmetrical threats and nontraditional battlefield operations, and do so effectively.

In light of our ever-changing environment, leaders at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), the Armor Center, and the 1st Armor Training Brigade should be commended for their efforts in implementing changes after a thorough review of both basic combat training and one-station unit training based on lessons learned from ongoing operations and feedback from the field. The goal is to improve the training in these courses to better prepare new soldiers for joining an "Army at war" by incorporating more field and weapons training. This is great news for our units that are preparing for duty in Iraq and in line with Chief of Staff Army, General Peter J. Schoomaker's intent that all soldiers are to be proficient in basic soldiering skills.

In his article, "Successful Scout Mounted Infiltration," Major Kent Strader addresses the importance of the battalion staff in preparing scouts for mission and combined-arms infiltration training techniques. His article is an excellent reminder of the importance of staff interaction in planning combat operations.

Captain John Nalls' article, "A Company Commander's Thoughts on Iraq," offers his observations on soldiering in Iraq from a company commander's perspective. His experiences, along with his profound

and matter-of-fact approach, provide a valuable and keen insight for units preparing to deploy to Iraq or other combat zones.

As mentioned earlier, prior to OIF, the term "dismounted tanker" was an almost sacrilegious thought. But the current contemporary operating environment in Iraq has changed that mentality. Captains Donald Stewart, Brian McCarthy, and James Mullin dispel the myth and offer their perspectives on the necessity of dismounting armor crewmen in their article, "Task Force Death Dealers: Dismounted Combat Tankers."

Stability and security operations continue in Afghanistan and as part of that, the armor community is contributing its expertise at training and shaping the Afghan National Army tanker corps. Captains Jonathan Byrom and Aaron Parker coauthor, "The First Afghan National Army T-62 Tank Gunnery," and describe the trials and tribulations they went through in training this new Afghan army unit.

Not since Vietnam has the U.S. Army been involved in so many large combat operations around the world. War is hell and full of unpredictable situations, but what differentiates us from many other nations is our Army's professionalism and obeying the law of land warfare. Major Dennis Chapman's timely article, "Treachery and Its Consequences: Civilian Casualties During Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Continued Utility of the Law of Land Warfare," reminds us of the importance, no matter how treacherous the enemy acts, of following the rule of law as it pertains to combat operations. Civilian casualties are unfortunate and sometimes an unpreventable by-product of war. We must do our best to mitigate these tragedies and not allow ourselves to be drawn down our enemy's path.

Task Force 1-64 Armor learned many lessons during combat operations against Iraqi military and paramilitary Fedayeen forces. On their return to Fort Stewart, Georgia, 1-64 Armor immediately implemented changes in their training strategy by incorporating lessons learned on the battlefield. One of the major lessons that leaders learned was in tank gunnery. In their article, "1-64 Armor's Rogue Gunnery Training Program," Lieutenant Colonel Eric Schwartz, Major Daniel Cormier, and Staff Sergeant Bobby Burrell address how 1-64 Armor has modified tank gunnery to enhance the unit's preparation against future asymmetrical threats.

That's all for now. Please continue to support the magazine and the U.S. Armor Association by writing and providing feedback. *ARMOR*'s success is completely driven by its readers. Keep up the great work in defending this Nation. — DRM

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